

1997

271  
So. E.

ON  
CONVERSATIONS  
SOUTHEAST  
ASIA

by *Jeanne Carruthers*



Digitized by the Internet Archive

LIBRARY



# CONTENTS

<i>Readings for Individuals</i>	Page
INTRODUCTION	4
THAILAND	5
HONG KONG	15
INDONESIA	24
THE PHILIPPINES	34
 <i>Suggestions for Circle Meetings</i>	
NOTES ON USING THIS BOOK	42
CONVERSATION ON THAILAND	10
CONVERSATION ON HONG KONG	20
CONVERSATION ON INDONESIA	30
CONVERSATION ON THE PHILIPPINES	39
FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION	42
 <i>Reading List</i> of Books published by the Joint Commission on Missionary Education for interdenominational study.	46
 <i>Audio-Visual Resources</i>	46

NOTE: Mrs. L. Bruce Carruthers, the author, is a member of the staff of the Office of Literature and Publications of the Board of Foreign Missions. For twenty years, she and her husband were Presbyterian missionaries at Miraj Medical Centre in India. She is the author of two one-act plays, *Fear Not* and *Physician in Charge*. The following missionaries contributed materials which were used as a basis for this writing: Mrs. Christine Slotemaker de Bruine (Indonesia), Mrs. Gordon Mahy (Philippines), Miss Alice Schaefer (Hong Kong), and Mrs. Forrest Travaille (Thailand).

## INTRODUCTION

The only difference between me and the average American church woman is that I've been to Southeast Asia. But of course that is quite a difference, because I am conscious of the fact that almost everything I read, eat, wear, spend, or pray about has something to do with my experience there.

My name is Mary Calvin. My husband is in the import business. He had to go on a business trip which called for stopovers of one to two weeks in Thailand, Hong Kong, Indonesia, and the Philippines. As we shall be completing twenty years of married life this autumn, he invited me to accompany him—an anniversary present—to look over the Church's "export business," he said.

It is difficult to summarize a journey so crowded with new experiences as ours, so I shall touch only the high spots as I recall them from my diary.

But before I begin to tell you my story, let me record two things that stand out, not what I did but what was done to me.

First of all, I learned that my husband was right when he called the overseas mission the export business of the church. The eye opener to me was the realization that exports cannot be considered apart from imports; that in order to maintain well-balanced trade relations, one must make provision for both the giving and receiving of every people—and this applies to Christianity as well as to business.

The second realization was that it takes *time* and *work* to understand people of another land and culture. I used to sit in my Circle without the slightest realization that mission study had anything to do with *me*.

Now I know that whatever country we are studying in my Circle is *mine*. From now on to read about it, using my imagination, and to study it with diligence will not be only my Christian duty but my delight.



## THAILAND

Before I took this trip the only thing I knew about Thailand first-hand was my neighbor's Siamese cat. I'd read a little and had heard missionaries speak about it, but in my mind it was a vague jumble of elephants, rice, Buddhist priests, and dancing girls in gold headdresses.

On the long sea voyage I read everything I could get hold of about Thailand. To my agreeable surprise, I found that the elements of my confused mental picture were not far wrong; they just needed focus and perspective.

I learned that elephants are still roaming the jungles of the north and are the most valuable wild animals in the country. They are used in the important teakwood industry to load the great logs on rafts to be floated down the rivers for export. I was surprised to learn that Thailand could support four times her present population. Millions of acres of land are still available, 70 per cent of which is still primitive jungle.

"No other nation in the world today is so dependent on rice as Thailand. . . . This one crop completely dominates agriculture . . . and 85 out of every 100 Thais are farmers . . . the canals of Thailand were

built to grow rice, and almost every Thai in some way or other lives off the rice market. The government has made rice marketing a monopoly and has assumed both the responsibility and the profit for selling it abroad. A standard low price is paid the farmer, and enormous profits are made for the government in place of taxes. . . . Insiders who know Thailand say only one thing could make the country go Communist: 'Let the government foul up the rice market.'

Then I was startled to read: "No other nation in the free world is so completely surrounded by Communists: China to the north, Vietnam to the east, the Communists of Malay to the south, and insurgent Burmese Communist armies to the west. Inside Thailand itself are three million Chinese, and Bangkok is 50 per cent Chinese. Most of them are loyal citizens of Thailand but a minority are potential converts to Communism."

At last we reached our destination, and I found the land even more beautiful than I had imagined. But in spite of the humid heat I felt a cold chill come over me as I took my first walk in Bangkok. Rightly it is called the Venice of Asia, with its twisting canals through which the life of the city flows; and the Geneva of Asia because of the innumerable international conferences and offices attracted to this lovely crossroads port. The cold chill was induced by my encounter with Buddhism for the first time. There are over 17,600 Buddhist temples in Thailand, 300 in Bangkok alone, their ornate roofs gleaming like jewels in the sun. Barefoot priests dressed in flaming saffron robes go begging food from the faithful who are allowed to give, and thereby store up merit for themselves. I learned that every Buddhist Thai male is expected to become a monk at some stage of his life for at least three months, and there are more Buddhist priests, novices, and acolytes in Thailand than there are Protestant Christian ministers in the U.S. I saw a young novice walking to the temple, shielded by a red silk umbrella, his head and eyebrows shaved. He was dressed in a white robe, with a lotus blossom in his hand, and he was accompanied by singing, shouting friends and relatives. In the temple he

---

The Thai characters on the emblem at the beginning of this chapter mean "department of literature." Under the direction of a Presbyterian missionary, this branch of the Church of Christ in Thailand has grown with phenomenal rapidity. It has five distribution centers located throughout Thailand for the sale of the large variety of materials being produced at the center in Bangkok. This material includes Thai translations of nine of the Presbyterian "Faith and Life" curriculum books.

would spend his time in prayer, study, and meditation, withdrawn from the evils of life, concentrating on the way to find for himself cessation from the never-ending cycle of lives that in Buddhist philosophy is the lot of mortal man. "Is Buddhism all that Thailand can offer in the way of resistance to the forces of atheistic Communism that menace her from all sides?" I asked myself.

Everything that happened to me from then on was an answer to that question. I discovered the Church of Christ in Thailand. Of course I had known there were Christians in Thailand, about 20,000 of them. I knew that missionaries had begun work there in 1828. I knew all the major events in mission history in fact, and was prepared to go back home and boast about how missionaries had brought modern medicine and surgery to Thailand, had introduced the first printing press, established the first girls' boarding school, and how a missionary had become the first American consul. But it was one thing to read about the Church of Christ in Thailand, something else to experience it in action.

First, I discovered the lovely, graceful women of my preconceived notion of Thailand—women whom Christ had touched—far more appealing than the dancing girls. At Wittana Wittaya Academy in Bangkok I sat beside a beautiful seventecn-year-old girl who wept because the authority of Buddhist parents prevented her from being one of the 20 schoolgirls who were joining the Church at the close of Spiritual Emphasis week. I watched a bewitching 80 pound co-ed living at the Christian Student Center<sup>1</sup> as she did her share of the housework and took part with the men students in a discussion of the Christian attitude toward Buddhism and Communism. The courage of that little girl and her 47 Christian friends to take part in a venture in co-educational living and manual labor right in the midst of Bangkok's 5,000 non-Christian college students!—surely this was one of the most exciting student centers in the world.

Later I met a warmhearted, outgoing member of the executive committee of the national women's organization of the Church. She told us that it had taken her nineteen years to win her husband to Christ. I saw the kindness in her face as she described the motherless Buddhist infant they had taken into their big family at the request of its father. Then I talked to "Grandma B", old and blind, who held

---

<sup>1</sup> See article, "Campus Home in Bangkok," by Ray Downs, *Presbyterian Life*, April 30, 1955.

up her hand and pointed to the first four fingers as she described how she prayed each morning for God's people in the north, in the south, in the east, and the west. "The thumb," she added, "is for all the world." Communism surrounding Thailand, north, south, east, and west—perhaps Grandma B has the Christian answer to it.

Since World War II, when it had to be closed because of the Japanese occupation, McGilvary Theological Seminary in Chiangmai has graduated about 12 students. Not many, not even half enough to supply the need for leadership in the Church. Not when things are happening the way they did in one village. A recent graduate of the Seminary told us how he and a volunteer team that included nurses from the mission hospital had gone out every weekend to a certain village for a year to teach Bible, demonstrate Christian living, and help the people in their never-ending struggle against malaria and typhoid. His eyes shone as he told us that 79 of these people had just been baptized and would soon be organized into a church. Only a few of them were able to read and write, he said, but they were eager to start a new Christian village like the one at Chiengrai. He offered to take me to see it.

I had read about the cooperative community started in 1949 with 60 Christian families chosen from Chiengrai Presbytery, living on 1,200 acres of jungle land. Nothing could have prepared me, however, for what I actually saw: each family in their own attractive thatch and bamboo house built up on six foot stilts and set in a garden on one acre of land; a community school with over 100 students; and a church with the largest communion in the Presbytery. Proudly our host led us to the tool house which held an amazing array of tractors, harrows, and plows, all owned and used cooperatively on the 400 acres cleared and farmed. I looked at the lean, sunburned men grouped about a new tractor and marvelled: 160 miles to the nearest railway station, then 400 miles by rail to Bangkok and the overseas market for their rice; tigers in the jungle that still carry off their pigs; bamboo that grows 40 feet in a single season. Together these Christian farmers are doing the impossible; it is there for everyone to see. Already 38 villages in the Chiengrai area have requested evangelists to come and tell them about Christ—a group of new Christians miles away is on fire to start a similar cooperative. Where will it all end? Working as a brotherhood—isn't this a solution to the problem of enough food for Asia?



"In a lush glen on the slopes of the 'Mountain as High as the Stars' wild monkeys feed on tropical fruits and drink from a crystal stream flowing out of a limestone cave where tiers of golden Buddhas sit in endless meditation." I had revelled in this description when I came across it, but hadn't realized that it was symbolic. Buddhism with its "endless meditation" has failed to eradicate the animism everywhere present among village people whose lives are ridden by fear of spirits. Each village has a local deity, and every home is inhabited by a spirit who has the power of life and death over everyone in the household. When a patient comes to him from such a background, it is not difficult for a Christian doctor to turn his thoughts to the spirit of the living God who heals all diseases. The Thai doctor in charge of one of the Presbyterian mission hospitals had started at six to make rounds and minister to the people who crowded after him. That night at ten we were sitting out in the brilliant moonlight when we heard his footsteps on the path. Drressed in white, his stethoscope still around his neck, he stopped and talked to us. The sound of temple bells and the chanting of priests from a distance came to us as the doctor spoke quietly: "Only love in action can win these people. Buddhism teaches good principles, but Christianity is a way of life. Buddha teaches how to avoid pain, but Christ teaches dedication of life regardless of pain."

Suddenly with a flash of understanding I realized what the Field Representative in Thailand of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions meant when he wrote:

"The year 2500 is the zenith (the year 1957 A.D. is the year 2500 in the Buddhist calender). Toward this year all creation, history, and intellectual striving have been moving, since the beginning of the Buddhist era. After 1957 we move toward the sunset—the inevitable fated decline that is not necessarily evil, because it is ordained, and the law of nature is cyclical. The only place forward is the measureless abyss. Why, then, are we, at this terrifying moment in history, to exert ourselves to change the ominous course of events? Since we inevitably descend, let us accept the fate that is our lot.

"A society conditioned by its religious heritage to accept the fated hopelessness and inevitable decline cannot resist Communism. For the

---

<sup>1</sup> See Thomas chap. 4 on Bishop Rodriguez.

<sup>2</sup> See Hallock chap. 4 for a good sketch of President Magsaysay.

evil of Communism, recognized as such by that society, is the inescapably fated evil that goes with the ordained decline.

"Can the Church match the hour? We do not know. But we do confess that God has brought us to this place and time."

## AT THE CIRCLE MEETING

*Let us talk about the place of the missionary in Thailand*

### I. *Informal Warm-up.*

During the first five minutes let the leader present several questions to discover what the various group members already know about Thailand. If the movie or social hour has been held previously, (see Notes on Using This Book) ask some questions about their reaction to that: When did you think of it again? What was the reaction of your family to it? Otherwise, begin with simple questions in the form of an association test. The following may be used:

1. What do you think of first when someone mentions Thailand? (pronounced Tie-land)
2. Do you know any Thai people? Anyone who has been in Thailand?
3. When you studied geography, was this country called Siam? (Perhaps someone could be assigned to look up the reason and significance for the change of name.)

### II. *Map Contest.*

Secure several maps (see page 47) so that groups of five or six can see one spread out on a table. Let the leader call out questions and the groups discover answers.

1. Find Thailand.
2. What countries are her neighbors?
3. If you were going to Thailand by ship, at what ports might you stop?
4. How close are the Communist areas?
5. Where are some of the chief centers of Presbyterian activity?  
(The leader will have looked these up on the *Year Book of Prayer* map so that she can tell whether the answers are correct.)

### III. *Interview with Mrs. Calvin.*

At this point bring out some of the facts found in the text. If the group has had a chance to read it, then the leader can ask the questions and each member might answer according to what Mrs. Calvin has told her. Each question would be preceded by "Did she tell you . . . ?"

If the group has not purchased their books before this meeting and therefore has had no opportunity to read the chapter, one person might be asked to impersonate Mrs. Calvin and be prepared to answer questions which the group will ask her. Questions might be written on individual pieces of paper, each member of the group drawing one. Mrs. Calvin would begin by making the statement of why she had been in Thailand. Some of the questions asked her might be:

What evidence did you see of the practice of religion in the country?

What is their chief religion?

What seemed to be their main industry?

What are some of the problems of the people?

Is Communism a problem?

Do they have an interracial problem?

What kind of things are the missionaries doing?

#### **IV. General Discussion.**

1. Do you think that we should have sent missionaries?
2. Now that the Church is established, should the missionaries be doing a different type of work? In your opinion, what should be stressed?
3. Do you think that missionaries going to a country where there is now an independent church should have some relationship to the church there? Should they work under Christian Thai leaders?

#### **V. Concluding Statements.**

A brief report of what the Presbyterian Church is now doing in Thailand and its relationships could be given by a person who has read the *1955 Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions* (Part II of General Assembly Minutes in your pastor's library) or articles in *Presbyterian Life* and *Outreach* following the 1956 Evaluation Conference of the Board. Or the leader may use the following statement from a recent moderator about whom more information is available in *The Church in Southeast Asia*, Thomas and Manikam, and conclude with the listing of items for continued effort and prayer.

The Reverend Puan Akkapin, Moderator of the Church of Christ in Thailand, said this to two representatives of the Board of Foreign Missions:

"Foreigners have come to sow the seed for more than one hundred years. For this we are grateful. Our Church is the first fruits of what was sown. So far the harvest has been small. But together we have continued to sow. In faith, we shall see one day a great harvest. I believe this fervently.

"What then shall we do about the harvest? The Scriptures and com-

mon sense tell us more workers are needed at harvest time. You came to help us sow with more than a hundred missionaries. Now we are ready to reap and there are but seventy Presbyterian missionaries. This is the reverse of the natural order. A few can sow, but many are needed to reap. There are places in Asia where missionaries are not welcome. But in Thailand, we want you as brothers to help us in the harvest God is preparing here. We need you, and we appreciate you.

“Now I want to tell you about a wise old man who told his disciples that two words were the key to all success. The words are not kwam dee (goodness) nor are they kwam mehta (mercy). The two words are kawp chai (thank you).

“Therefore, we Thai thank you for all you have done, and ask you to send more missionaries.”

## **VI. REMEMBERING OUR HIGH CALLING IN CHRIST JESUS, LET US PRAY FOR THAILAND.**

Thinking what it means to a member of the Church of Christ in Thailand, a minority group of 17,000 among 17 million Buddhists. . .

- to ask if more imagination should not be put into the methods of presenting Christianity;
- to question why the number of Christian converts increases so slowly;
- to realize that the majority of one's countrymen equate Buddhism with patriotism and nationalism;
- to have no Christian university in Thailand, and to be told the Church is not allowed to establish one;
- to have only one seminary which has graduated only a dozen fully trained pastors since it was reopened in 1952.

*These things bring us to our knees to pray with a faculty member of that Seminary:*

O Lord God, heavenly Father of all mankind, we humbly pray for our country Thailand that the King and the government may receive Thy providence and care, that they may rule with love, justice, and mercy. O God, grant to this country Thy peace which the world cannot give and protect it from trouble and chaos. Bless the people and open their minds to the light of the Truth in Thee so that they may be reconciled to Thee and be as Thy children.

We pray for the administration, the unity, and the ministry of the Church in this land, so that through the Church all the people may become one in Thee and with one another. We pray for all ministers and church officers who are serving Thee in sundry ways in this land that they may be indwelled and empowered by the Holy Spirit; and so through Thy Wisdom they may preach the Word of Truth to lead many to come to Thee in humility and repentance.

Bless all Thy children in their work, their lives, and their service in the Church. Bless them with all things which are necessary both for the soul and the body. Enlighten those who are in darkness, convert those who are in sin, and comfort those who are in trouble, sorrow, need, or sickness. Unto all men everywhere give Thy grace and Thy blessing; we ask this in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

*Prayer written by*

THE REV. PRASERT INDHABHANDHU  
McGilvary Theological Seminary  
Chiangmai, Thailand

After the meeting start the *READING ROUTE*, asking various members to volunteer to read certain chapters and pass them on to others.

*The Church in Southeast Asia*, Thomas and Manikam  
Chapter 1—"Southeast Asia and the Missionaries"  
Chapter 5—"War and Communism"

*East from Burma*, Constance Hallock  
Chapter 7—"The Land of the Free"

*Day After Tomorrow*, Alice Hudson Lewis  
Stories of Southeast Asia

*Village Life in Modern Thailand*, John E. deYoung  
University of California Press, Berkeley, 1955  
A descriptive account of peasant life in Thailand from  
a sociological point of view.

*Tales of Thailand*, Florence Bingham Crooks  
Privately printed, 1942

*Anna and the King of Siam*, Margaret Landon  
John Day Company, New York, 1944

*Annual Report, Board of Foreign Missions*  
Section on Thailand

See also articles following the April, 1956 Evaluation Conference of the Board of Foreign Missions in *Outreach* and *Presbyterian Life*.

The following books on Southeast Asia contain informative sections on Thailand:

*Southeast Asia in the Coming World*, ed. Philip Thayer  
John Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1953

*Southeast Asia, A Short History*, Brian Harrison  
St. Martin's Press, New York, 1954

*Asia, East by South*, A Cultural Geography by Joseph Spencer  
John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1954

*Southeast Asia*, E. H. G. Dobby  
John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1950

*The Voice of Asia*, James A. Michener  
Random House, New York, 1951

*The World At One In Prayer*, ed. Daniel J. Fleming  
Harpers Brothers, New York, 1942



# HONG KONG

**H**ong Kong has one of the most beautiful harbors in the world . . . at night from the hills above it is like jewels spilled on black velvet. . . . From barren island to one of the world's biggest ports in less than a century . . . Hong Kong today has the highest density of population in the world. A million people live on Hong Kong Island, ten miles long, which was ceded by China to the British after the Opium War in 1842; over a million more live in Kowloon at the tip of a peninsula coming down from southeastern China, ceded reluctantly by China in 1861, so the British could secure the northern end of their strategic harbor; a quarter of a million people live in the New Territories, which is the name given to the rest of the peninsula, 355 square miles in area, leased in 1898 to Britain by China until the year 1997. . . . Hong Kong is a British Crown Colony, a patch 40 miles long and 30 deep adjoining China's south border."

---

The golden links around the border of this disk (above) and the cross in the middle were used to identify Chinese citizens as Christians. The emblem was worn as a coat button by Christians everywhere in China until the bamboo curtain descended in 1950.

Interesting enough, but the more I read the less I could understand why Hong Kong should have been included in our list of the countries of Southeast Asia that were of special concern to Presbyterians. The answer to that question came to me in three successive hilltop experiences which I shall try to cull out from a multitude of fascinating but less important happenings in one of the most exciting weeks of my life.

The first was in a church set high up on a hill, where I met charming Mrs. Ching Ming Lee, wife of the pastor. Mrs. Lee is president of the Women's Federation of the Chinese Church of Christ in Hong Kong. She graduated from Dr. Sun Yat Sen University in Canton, married and went with her husband to Canada where he studied for his Bachelor of Divinity degree. She, along with Emily Gibbes of the U.S.A. and Mrs. Jael Cruz of the Philippines, made up the International Fellowship Team sent to India in 1953 by the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. Now two years later, she spoke of what a joy it had been to send \$150, raised by the Women's Federation of Hong Kong, to India to help the victims of the recent floods. The Family Life conference in Manila was the subject of most of her talks to the churches, Mrs. Lee said, since she and the other four ladies from the Hong Kong Federation had returned from that inspiring gathering of women from Indonesia, Thailand, Japan, Burma, India. . . . Could I get this woman with her eyes on the horizons of the world to tell me just the rudimentary things I needed to know about the Church in Hong Kong?

She was most accommodating. She told me that Presbyterian missionaries first came to live in Hong Kong five years ago. Those who had been stationed in China automatically became members of the Hong Kong district (synod) of the Church of Christ in China, which comprises 18 local congregations, ranging in number from 20 to 2,700. Altogether there are over 8,000 Protestant Christians in Hong Kong and the numbers are growing every week. A congregation of Mandarin-speaking Chinese who cannot understand the Cantonese spoken in the other churches is the most recent group to be organized. Perhaps the most vital are the little churches that spring up among groups of the poorest refugees in response to a deep need. She showed me one of them, a single room—the floor covered with tar paper, the walls made out of Standard Oil tins flattened out and painted white. A refugee layman was responsible for the services, as they had no regular minister.



The Women's Federation, Mrs. Lee said, was most deeply involved in the Children's Center on another hilltop nearby, a project for refugee children to which American Presbyterian women also had contributed. As we went up the winding path over loose stones and slippery mud, we passed men and women going up and down the hill, balancing huge loads of wild grass on their heads or pails of water strung on long poles over their shoulders.

Unlike most refugees these people were not here against their will, she commented. Sometimes it was opposition to the Communist regime in principle but more often it was flight from Communism for political, business or financial reasons. A United Nations poll revealed that less than 1/10 of one percent would return to China if they could. Some who had brought capital funds with them had been able to start new factories and shops. Others had gone to countries such as South America, Indonesia, and the South Sea Islands.

But 200,000 of them are destitute, living in shanty towns on the mountain side in houses made of mud, paper and crates, cooking over grass fires because wood is too expensive. Their flimsy shacks were being wiped out periodically by roaring fires that left them only alleys and doorways to sleep in. It was for these people that the neat, busy Children's Center at the top of the hill was started in 1954. Almost every month something new has been added to the initial program of instruction in the three R's and Bible. A director of religion, a public health nurse and a sewing teacher have joined the staff, and recently a night class for factory girls has been started.

Over 120 children, seven to twelve years of age, were in the Center that day. They had been chosen from hundreds who applied. The director, Miss Hoh-Yin-Yin, laughed as she told us how they had first become famous as the place where you could get a bath once a week under the hose. Water is a major problem in Hong Kong. It is available only three hours a day and people begin to queue up before the faucets five hours ahead of time with their pails. As we looked down on the squatter huts we saw next to them row upon row of multiple housing units made of reinforced concrete. The government is erecting them to accommodate the refugees, allotting a family to a room  $9\frac{1}{2} \times 11\frac{1}{2}$ , reckoning a minimum of five to a family. The large screened-in roofs of the units offered the church another means of helping refugee children, 1,000 of whom were estimated to be living in each unit. One roof top, designed to accommodate children

from three units, is run by the Women's Council and the Presbyterian Mission from One Great Hour of Sharing funds. Only a fraction of the 3,000 children involved can be accommodated but a lively program of games and handwork, study and health care goes on all day long. Dedicated workers and volunteers climb daily up the seven flights of steps and the steep mountain path to look after these children.

American churches through Church World Service have built a Christian village of 190 cottages with a model nursery for another carefully picked group of refugees. Miss <sup>X</sup>Yin-Yin told us about a man who had become a Christian recently because he had seen the "impulse to care" among church people. He is running a shop now on Christian principles that gives regular employment to 100 refugee women.

It was the third hilltop, however, that gave me the final insight into what is going on in Hong Kong. Castle Peak is twenty miles out in the New Territories, a cool beautiful place away from the crowded city. Here the Ho Fuk Tong Center has been erected by the Hong Kong Church of Christ in China. The director, Dr. Fung, lives and works with British and American missionaries of three denominations. It is a retreat and conference center for young people's groups, teachers, women's organizations, and church workers. At this center, sooner or later, you meet the cream of Hong Kong's Christian people.

I heard about the student program from a slender bright-eyed theological student who told me that last year 130 young people from the nine "refugee colleges" that have sprung up in Hong Kong taught 4,000 children in primary schools at night, helped in relief programs and thereby earned part of their school fees; 90 students volunteered for service in three work camps during their vacation. He told me it wasn't the money they received that did the most for them but it was the feeling of being a part of the church in action that lifted their thoughts away from the frustrations and worries of their personal lives. Later I heard that this lad himself had come to Hong Kong alone; his family were still in China and he heard about them only from occasional visitors, because his ailing old father, a doctor, had asked him as a precaution not to try to correspond with them.

A fine group of teachers was there from Hip Woh School, formerly the Union Middle and Normal School in Canton. Political difficulties

in China had necessitated a move to Kowloon, where the school occupies rented, crowded quarters. Here 210 children attend classes from kindergarten through the sixth grade. They come from all walks of life; 500-600 would attend if there were room. Miss Tsui-Chee, the principal, lives in a room the size of a roomette on an American train. Some of the teachers sleep on kindergarten tables because there is no room for beds.

Another group of eighty attractive girls was there from Kowloon True Light Middle School, another "refugee" institution. Their buildings are completely inadequate for the 300 girls in attendance, I was told, but the Christian character training that distinguished the famous parent school in Canton still goes on. The girls I met had conducted a Sunday school for 125 poor children from the squatter areas near the school. During their vacations these girls carried on a literacy class for them.

Just before we were due to sail, I heard about a very important event. Hong Kong had been the place chosen for a meeting last year that made history, the establishment of the Asia Council on Ecumenical Mission under the World Council of Churches. Representatives of the Churches in Japan, Thailand, Korea, the Philippines and invited guests from the churches in Hong Kong made plans for an exchange of fraternal workers and aid in services among the countries of East Asia. Already there were Japanese and Filipino fraternal workers in Okinawa, Filipino missionaries in Thailand and Indonesia, and Korean missionaries in north China.

As we stood looking out over the blue water, the Hong Kong islands blended with the China mainland, vague and light green, with clouds and blue sky mingling indefinitely above it. Canton was only eighty miles away. Hong Kong is still the middleman of the East; the only place where Red China and the West can exchange goods. The border between wanders indefinitely through the main thoroughfare of a village in the New Territories. Hong Kong is the place where Christianity meets Communism literally face to face in the street. Hong Kong churches are still a synod of the Church of Christ in China. There are Christian Chinese in every country of East Asia. That very day a Hong Kong pastor was preparing to fly to Thailand to lead a young people's conference at the invitation of the Chinese churches of Bangkok. Hong Kong is the place where all

the Christians of East Asia can meet and plan together. It is the crown colony of Him who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

## AT THE CIRCLE MEETING

*Let us talk about the changes that have come in the approach and method of the missionary, using the work in Hong Kong as an example.*

A brief historical background of Presbyterian interest in Southern China will need to be presented by a member of the group who has had previous preparation. Some material is given below, but it may be supplemented by reading one of the historical references suggested in the Reading Route. A turn-over chart may help to present it in a sketchy form, if one could be made with imagination. Only enough facts need to be presented to enable the group to draw the contrasts between the "old" and the "new" day in missions as a basis for discussion.

### **I. Background Statement.**

Some forty years after Robert Morrison landed in China and began the long arduous task of learning the language, making friends, and finding ways to give his testimony in a strange land among people with very strange customs, the first Presbyterian missionaries arrived on sailing vessels in Hong Kong, then a British port. They traveled on up to Canton where they began work, experiencing the same slow process of all early pioneers. Strange though it may be, there always seemed to be some friendly person who would let the preachers speak in a vacant room or meeting place. Dr. A. P. Happer made the first testimony for our Church through times of opposition and struggle. Others joined him. The Reverend Henry Noyes, arriving in 1866, began work as an educator, and his sister, Harriet Noyes, accompanied him to take an interest in the girls and their education. So strange was this latter idea, that at first she had to pay the parents of the girls to let them come to her home for education.

By 1917, when the Wallines were sent to Canton, there was a Presbyterian Church in China with several synods and its own General Assembly. The Pui Ying Middle School for Boys which Henry Noyes had founded had grown to have 800 boys, and the True Light Middle School for Girls (Harriet Noyes' school) had 400 students. There were many other institutions.

In 1922, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in China agreed to merge its organization into the newly forming Church of Christ in China, which was finally made up of thirteen churches, mostly of the Reformed tradition of Protestantism. The general office was established in Shanghai where they have continued until this day. One of their synods,

centered in Canton, was called the Kwangtung Synod. It had ten District Associations (presbyteries) and Presbyterian missionaries were working in seven of them at the time that the Communists came into control and the foreign missionaries had to leave or were imprisoned. Hong Kong, as a British colony, remained free and the Hong Kong District Association of the Church of Christ in China set up its offices there. Today Dr. Walline, the field representative of the Board of Foreign Missions, has his office in Hong Kong and missionaries are assigned to the True Light School and the Hip Woh School which have "refugee" from the mainland. Another missionary is doing student work among youth in the government university and Presbyterians share in interest in the new Christian college just founded. To all this is added cooperation with all the activities of the Church which were mentioned in Mrs. Calvin's account.

## II. Comparison Chart.

Allow the group to draw a comparison between what a missionary would face in 1856 and 1956. List on the blackboard in two separate columns.

1856	1956
No friendly Chinese Christians	Welcomed by established Chinese Church
Population isolated from other countries	International communication, international communism, etc.
No Christian literature in the language and few who could read	Many Christian schools staffed with educated Chinese faculty

Continue with other contrasts such as living conditions, kinds of opposition, types of work of the missionaries, etc.

## III. General Discussion.

1. What ways of Christian witness were mentioned by Mrs. Calvin which would have been impossible in the early days?  
Examples are: International team; International Conference on the Christian Home; pilot projects like the "model village"; student work.
2. What is the chief problem facing Christian workers in the Hong Kong area?  
Refugees and resulting overpopulation; lack of educational facilities; flow of people in and out of China; proximity to Communist propaganda.
3. A special priority fund has been set aside by the Presbyterian Church for evangelism in areas affected by Communism. Obviously Hong Kong is one of them. In what kinds of work would you place this money? How do you think we might be most effective in its use?

#### IV. REMEMBERING OUR HIGH CALLING IN CHRIST JESUS, LET US PRAY FOR HONG KONG.

Thinking of the overpowering and immediate physical problem of the refugee Christian families who look to the Church for help. . .

we look beyond to the strategic position of the Church in Hong Kong;

we remember their fellow Christians in China from whom they and we are cut off;

we realize that the Christians of Hong Kong must literally come face to face with atheistic, materialistic Communism daily on the streets;

we realize that many young people are without hope of education because there is no room in the schools;

we are aware of the hundreds of overseas Chinese, who are passing through Hong Kong, being brought back to China from their homes in other countries of Southeast Asia at the expense of the Chinese government;

*we bow our heads with Pastor John K.C. Ma of the China Congregational Church of Hong Kong when he prays:*

Eternal God, Father of all mankind, from Whom cometh every good and perfect gift, we thank Thee for this small part of the world in which Thou hast placed us. For the beautiful harbor, for the towering peak, for the fragrant stream and for the scenic surroundings we glorify Thee. Above all, we praise Thee for the great opportunities which Thy Church has in preaching and in ministering to the masses who are hungry both spiritually and physically. We beseech Thee, O Lord, pour Thy Holy Spirit upon all the Christians in Hong Kong that they may ever be alive to the responsibilities of these times, and be ready to exert themselves for the tasks to which Thou hast called them. Give Thy Church wisdom and courage; that, when others question, Thy Church may affirm; when others flee, Thy Church may advance; and when others fall, Thy Church may stand; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## READING ROUTE

*Hong Kong, the Island Between*, Christopher Rand  
Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1952.

*Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions*  
Section on Hong Kong

*One Hundred Years*, Arthur Judson Brown, Chapter 8,  
Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, 1936.

*National Geographic Magazine*, "Hong Kong Hangs On"  
February, 1954, pp. 239-272.

*Holiday Magazine*, May, 1955

*Risk and Hope – The Hong Kong Story*, Andrew T. Roy  
50¢ available from P.D.S. (Ready Fall, 1956)

Although *The Church in Southeast Asia* by Thomas and Manikam does not treat on Hong Kong extensively, any of the first four chapters and Chapter 14 will provide background for the student of this area.



# INDONESIA

My hostess showed me the coat of arms of the Republic of Indonesia. It was a striking crest—Garuda, the mystic bird of Sanskrit legend, but so very like our own American golden eagle.

“How many tail feathers do you see?” she asked.

“Eight,” I replied.

“How many wing feathers?”

“Seventeen.”

“Well, on the 17th day of the 8th month, 1945, the Republic of Indonesia came into being. A remarkable speech was made by President Sukarno at that time, in which he laid down five foundation principles for the nation. They were symbolized and became the shield you see on the eagle’s breast. It consists of the head of a *bull*, signifying democracy, ‘within the people’s representative body, Moslems and Christians should work as if inspired,’ Sukarno had said; a *banyan tree*, the unity of the people, the unity between a man and his land; *sprays of rice and cotton*, social justice, enough for all; a *linked chain* humanitarianism or one family of all nations; and *the star* in the

---

The crest above is the official seal of the Republic of Indonesia, the Garuda or Eagle.



very center, faith in God. The black line running through the middle is the equator. This is Indonesia—you won't find it by looking at a conglomeration of islands on the map."

I was ashamed of my initial reactions to Indonesia on board the ship. When I first studied the map and discovered a whole chain of islands extending over 3,000 miles of the Pacific Ocean, my secret hope was that the Presbyterian Church would have dealings with only one or two of them since it had sent missionaries there only since 1950. But no—I learned that the Presbyterians were vitally interested in the National Christian Council, composed of 30 church bodies located on every major island in the archipelago!

We landed in Java and went to the capital city, Jakarta. I knew that three-fourths of Indonesia's nearly eighty million people live on Java, which is the size of the state of Illinois, but nothing could have prepared me for the congestion I experienced in Jakarta. Three or four families were in every house. Hotel rooms were impossible to obtain. Whole village communities were crowded into a block square. Jakarta has grown from a half million before World War II to over two and a half million people. And yet somehow the great sprawling city managed to retain almost a rural atmosphere compared to the rush and tension of comparable American cities. The people were sunny, patient, and reasonable, always ready to laugh and willing to stop and answer questions.

Mrs. Leimena was the hostess who had explained to me the Indonesian coat of arms. She is president of the All-Indonesian Christian Women's Organization, formed in 1946, the culmination of 20 years of quiet work among local church groups. She told us that the Women's Organization publishes a monthly paper and cooperates with government "whenever our Christian principles allow us to do so." It gives financial help to churches, schools, and theological seminaries. Bible study and personal witnessing for Christ; helping to establish day nurseries, clinics, sewing classes, teaching adults to read—their program sounded strangely familiar as she outlined it to me. Church women all—from Dorcas and Tabitha on down to Mrs. Leimena of Indonesia and Mrs. Salsbury of the U.S.A.! My admiration for Mrs. Leimena grew as I learned more about her. Her husband, a Christian physician, is minister of health in the present cabinet. Married at 16, the mother of 9 children, she is the only

member of her family who is a Christian. Her family are of the Sundanese nobility and were flatly opposed to her baptism. "Hardships are God-sent," was her only comment.

She told us that women now have equal voting rights with men. A woman represents Indonesia on the Committee on Human Rights of the U.N. Women are in every profession, even the Christian ministry, and co-education is universal.

An oxcart rumbled past, bicycles and cycle rickshaws dodged in and out between motor cars as we talked. "Time has meant so little up to now," she told us. They have a phrase to describe their idea of punctuality which in translation is "the elastic hour." Nature is gentle. The weather is always warm to hot and the land, enriched with volcanic minerals, will produce two or three harvests a year and innumerable varieties of fruit trees. But now time is of the essence. The country must educate its millions of illiterates. It must stabilize its economy, industrialize and take its place among the great nations of the world, all the while sparing for time to train technicians, scientists, and leaders who can accomplish these things. I understood what she meant when an Indonesian friend wrote to me: "We as Christians are called to be a witness for Christ in the turmoil of these years. The government is not yet stabilized, nor is youth. We have to understand the needs of this generation, standing in full freedom, not adequately prepared and insufficiently understanding themselves."

It is impossible to understand the Indonesian people without seeing the beauty of their homeland. Painting is taught in the schools in spite of an acute shortage of teachers. Handicrafts flourish even in remote villages. The beauty of the Islands is woven and dye-stamped into textiles, carved and etched into wood, clay, and metal; rice plants, bamboos, palm trees; butterflies and leaves; fish, shells, wave-imprinted sea sand, pheasants and birds of paradise. Music and dancing are in the marrow of their bones. A universal sense of rhythm gives the people a supple dignity of movement and a grace of bearing that any Westerner might envy.

Never have I seen such exotic beauty as exists on the fabulous island of Bali where we went next. Nevertheless the Christians of Bali are literally down to earth. The fine pastor we met told us he had come as a missionary from East Java years ago. He took me to a lovely village where 1,000 Christians live. There I found 34 church

leaders and farmers gathered for a ten day study of water supply, improved farming methods, and livestock raising.

One of the outstanding Christian women we met in the island of Celebes was Mrs. Tumangken, Inspector of Health, with responsibility for the physical well-being of six and a half million people. She told us that she was working in a village hospital when the Japanese came and bombed her hospital three times, but not until after she had evacuated all her patients to the woods. For three years she was the only doctor for 200,000 people. Health education, control of malaria and tuberculosis, training enough doctors and nurses, these are the great concerns of all Indonesian medical people. She explained the peculiarly difficult situation facing the 40 Christian hospitals and hundreds of clinics in Indonesia today. They were subsidized by the Dutch government before the war but now the Republic has warned the Church that the government finds itself unable to carry the heavy financial load after next year. Christian doctors have formed a medical association under the National Christian Council and are attacking together the problem of financing and training personnel for Christian medical work in the whole of Indonesia.

We went to the Moluccas next, the Spice Islands that Columbus tried in vain to find, the pepper, cloves, and nutmeg that the Portuguese took from them unmolested until the Dutch snatched away their enormously profitable trade in 1667.

Somchow I had not expected to find there a cultured person like Mrs. de Fretes-Tumbelaka, former YWCA secretary, minister's wife, and director of a teacher training institute, who came to meet us. Nor had I dreamed of finding on the Moluccas a Protestant church of 250,000 members. Mrs. Tumbelaka's face glowed as she told us about the Christian youth movement that is the pride of their church and that attracted to the Moluccas the first all-Indonesian work camp. She showed me a delightful photograph of President Sukarno with a group of Christian students rolling cement for the foundations of a church school. This strong youth work is feeding into the older women's groups and building up the churches as well. Eighty churches were destroyed by bombing during World War II. The Indonesian government is helping to rebuild some of them by the subsidy it gives through its Ministry of Religion to damaged churches, mosques, and temples. But life is not easy on the Moluccas. Communications

are very difficult, and life on the more remote islands is primitive and hard.

A breath of the old romance came to us as we stood looking at a grove of spice trees: peppers, tall gray nutmeg trees, shiny-leafed, fragrant cloves, and cacao trees. On the white sand of the beach a small square-bowed ship, with its picturesque sails furled, lay at anchor ready to take the produce to market. The ship, we were told, belongs to the Synod, and the garden is part of a five-year plan of economic self-help recently drawn up by the Church of Molucca.

Borneo was next, one of the largest islands in the world, with vast resources of petroleum, gold, coal, rubber, and pepper waiting to be found and utilized. The iniquitous phrase "wild man of Borneo" that I had picked up as a child ill-prepared me to talk with ease to the delightful Dayak Christian lady who came to take us to her home. Mrs. Mahar expressed the concern of the whole enlightened Church of Borneo for the backward people of the vast inland regions. She told us about jungle people in regions as yet unexplored by the outside world. A thin layer of Moslem religious practices over unfathomed depths of animistic fears brings them little comfort. They need Christian pastors, teachers, and health workers. Mrs. Mahar said her prayer was that the Christian young people from Borneo now going to Java for their higher education would catch the vision of service to their own needy Island people.

Sumatra, the island where we went last, is three times the size of Java, and has only a fourth as many people. "The Isle of Hope" is its nickname. It has everything: oil and coal, rubber, tea, coffee, tobacco. It has water power, plenty of fertile land, and an independent, sturdy people from whom a great many of the top leaders of Indonesia have come.

Here I had my first real glimpse of one of the major problems of the Christian Church in Indonesia—the clan system of family organization. The great Batak Church, 600,000 strong and nearly 100 years old, is in western Sumatra. It represents the harvest of the Rhenish Mission of Germany, but comes from seed planted by two American missionaries, martyred by the untamed ancestors of the present day Batak Christians, who were among the last people on the Islands to surrender to the Dutch. The clan system of customary law was highly developed, and when a large group decided to become Christian they brought most of their customary laws with them intact.

Charming Mrs. Sarumpaet, a woman lawyer and a leader in her church, said to us: "For a Batak, life finds its meaning in increasing the number of men to strengthen the clan. A woman counts only after she has given birth to a son, and women have few rights of inheritance. This is not according to God's purpose as taught in the Scriptures. Christian marriage should be founded on Christ's love instead of on a son. The government of Indonesia is preparing new marriage laws in which Moslems and Christians will each have their own arrangements, so the Batak church must remake their ideas according to the Gospel."

The greatest problem right now is lack of trained leaders; whereas before World War II there were 80 German missionaries in Batak-land, now there are three. There are only 134 trained ministers for 1,000 congregations, which means that each pastor must care for more than 87,000 persons. It must be added, however, that the work of the pastors in Batak-land is lightened immeasurably by 100 trained Bible women, and 1,000 volunteer lay evangelists. But new challenges from Roman Catholic missions and many zealous "splinter" sects have awakened the Batak Church to the need of knowing their creed and the faith on which they stand, and of more leadership of the highest quality. They realize also the necessity for outreach and have a missionary body, the Zending Batak, that is helping to evangelize the rest of their own people and is also sending missionaries to Borneo.

As we returned to Java by air I tried to do a mental sketch that would convey my most outstanding impression of Indonesia. It was of a whole nation going to school: lovely little boys and girls swinging along the path to tiny country schools; eager college students studying law, medicine, engineering, theology in rented buildings without a campus; and one of the million unlettered adults learning to read each year.

I looked at the Garuda again, painted on the wings of the plane. In its talons I saw a scroll with these words written on it in Malayan: "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, Many Remain One." I thought of our American motto, "E Pluribus Unum, out of many, one." We did it—so will they! And in that great consummation, the Church of Christ in Indonesia is destined to play a leading role.

## AT THE CIRCLE MEETING

*Let us talk about how Christianity can help build a new nation in Indonesia.*

### **I. Viewing the Map from a Comparative Standpoint.**

The time has now come to look again at the maps, for here is a tremendously important area of the world which we must not continue to overlook. Perhaps someone could make it more vivid by drawing some men in a proportionate scale to show the relative population of these areas:

Indonesia—approximately 80 million

Philippines—approximately 21 million

Thailand—approximately 19 million

India—approximately 356 million

At one side draw an American to indicate a population of 150 million. Compare the size of the countries on the map with the population chart. On a different scale, draw another series of men showing the number of Protestant Christians in each country.

Indonesia—approximately 2 million

Philippines—approximately 152,000 thousand

Thailand—approximately 20 thousand

India—approximately 4 million

Note the place of Indonesia in these comparisons.

### **II. Discussion Based on a Predicament.**

Previously one woman has been asked to prepare the following impersonation representing some of the problems which have developed in recent years in Indonesia. Ask the group, at the end of the presentation, to help this person make her decision, giving the reasons why.

*Presentation:*

I am one of those people in the world who once had a right to decide what my nationality would be. You see my grandfather was a Dutchman. When the first Dutch settlers came to Indonesia, there were no women with them and they married the native women. They tell me that in her youth my grandmother was the kind of intelligent and attractive woman any European would have wanted for a wife, even though he had had the whole Netherlands from which to choose! Because there is Dutch blood in my veins, as is true of many present day Indonesians, when independence came I was given a period of time to decide whether I wished to remain a Dutch citizen or renounce this citizenship in favor of being a national of Indonesia.

Here are some of the factors I had to consider. I am a Christian. Naturally the Dutch, being from a Christian nation, have protected the Christians. When a government controlled by Moslems takes over, would I have safety? I have some education which the majority of Indonesians do not. I do not like to be classified as an "ignorant brown person" by you. I am a government worker; if I left the country I could probably earn my living. On the other hand, if I remain, the only good jobs would probably be in government offices and the fact that I am not a pure Indonesian might some day be held against me for "nationalism" is strong. I live in one of the most overly-populated areas of the world with relatively no privacy. Would I serve my country better by moving and leaving a little more room?

I can see that the Dutch have exploited my people for the sake of supporting their home government—Ah, you see, I have given myself away when I say "my people". For I really feel that these are my people, my family, and I along with them resent all the West has done to exploit us for their benefit. At the same time I cannot forget the days when the Japanese, an oriental nation, also over-ran us and occupied this nation as a "liberator", and the American government stood out for our becoming an independent country. There are certain menacing signs on the horizons. The Communist parties are taking advantage of the unstable politics. The farmers hear their promises, and seeing the sickle on the banner which is what they use in the fields, think this is the party for them. We are so far away from everybody that there are very few newspapers and most people could not read them anyway. How can we be a democracy? And do I want to live under a dictatorship, even of my own people?

On the other hand, if those of us who have education and Christian ideals do not help to build a new nation, what will happen? We do not feel as isolated as the others, for we have Christian friends overseas. But these Christian friends are "Dutch," "Japanese," "White" which makes us "suspect" because of what their countries have done. So there will be risks of conscience, of livelihood, whichever way I turn.

By this time, as I am talking to you, the date is past when I could choose. I made my choice. Perhaps you have already guessed what it was. Was I wise? Can you suggest reasons?

(As part of the discussion the leader will point out that one of our Quadrennial Objectives is to *Press forward in our glorious Protestant heritage*. How did Christianity help America to become a democracy? Could it do the same for Indonesia?)

### III. Summary at Tea.

Continue the discussion around the tea tables, dividing the members into groups of three or four around tables, and asking each of them to be

one of the islands Mrs. Calvin visited. Previously a leader will have been named for each group so she could have studied with particular attention one of the Christian ladies Mrs. Calvin describes in this chapter. Assign each group an imaginary guest who is a real woman in Indonesia, such as Mrs. Leimena who lives in Jakarta; the inspector of health in the Celebes, Mrs. Tumangken; Mrs. de Fretes-Tumbelaka in the Moluccas; Mrs. Mahar of Borneo; Mrs. Sarumpaet of the Batak Church in Sumatra. Let each group talk over the woman, imagining her problems, saying what they like about her, finding her island on the map. After tea is served, let each group introduce their "friend" to the others telling what they read about her and what they feel must be true about her heart's concern.

#### **IV. REMEMBERING OUR HIGH CALLING IN CHRIST JESUS, LET US PRAY FOR INDONESIA.**

Let us realize. . . .

that independence from colonial powers is an exhilarating experience for any people, but that there remains the problem of building a responsible citizenship;

that there is a large ratio of illiteracy, great public health problems, and an impoverished populace in the rural areas;

the problem of bringing into one fellowship of churches the two million Protestants living on islands that are scattered over an ocean area equal to the distance from New York to California, people who speak over 200 different languages and come from many racial groups;

the extent of the unevangelized regions of the largest islands;

that whole clans have become Christian in name but many members still cling to their animistic beliefs;

that there are more than 3000 churches without pastors, Christian schools without teachers, hospitals without qualified doctors.

*We pray from our hearts with Bonar Sidjabat, Indonesian Theological student;*

We pray from our hearts, Almighty and everlasting God, who of Thy tender love toward mankind hast sent Thy Son our Saviour, Jesus Christ; unto Thee be all praise and glory, that day by day Thou doest richly fill our life in this part of the world with various grace. We beseech Thee that Thou may give us Thy peace and Thy righteousness. We pray for our government, that it may know that Thine is the Kingdom and the True Power.



Thou knowest, O Lord, that these young Churches in Indonesia are confronted with many problems. We are weak. Give us the strength to persevere in bearing witness among our brothers and sisters who still walk apart from Thy way. We ask Thee, O Lord, that Thou might use us humble servants, walking in this pilgrimage.

We ask this in Jesus' name, Our Saviour. Amen.

BONAR SIDJABAT

Sumatra—Indonesia

Now a student at Princeton Seminary

#### READING ROUTE

*The Church in Southeast Asia*, Thomas and Manikam

Chapter 11—"The Churches in Indonesia"

Chapter 7—"The Religious Climate"

*East From Burma*, Constance Hallock

Chapter 5—"Republic in the Making"

*Indonesia, Land of Challenge*, Marguerite Harmon

Bro, Harpers Brothers, New York, 1954

See also sections on Indonesia in the general books on Southeast Asia, listed on page 14.

*Cooperation in Indonesia*, Free, available from P. D. S.



## *The PHILIPPINES*

Purposely I've held back until now something very special; our meeting with four delightful Filipino missionaries, the Rev. and Mrs. Jose Estoye, living in a small village in Thailand; and the Rev. and Mrs. Jorge Quismundo, on the staff of the theological seminary in Makassar, Indonesia.

When we were in Thailand, Mr. Estoye with a group of volunteer laymen had just returned from a trip into the jungle on his bicycle. His eyes shone as he told us about it. "When our team held its last service something happened which is rare in a strong Buddhist country like Thailand. Ten whole families were won to Christ."

Mr. Quismundo was teaching a class at the Seminary when we visited Makassar, but Mrs. Quismundo, exquisite in her "angel wing" Filipino blouse, entertained us at tea. She told us how touched they had been by news of a gift that had just come to them from a little group of their countrymen, primitive tribespeople who had brought eggs and chickens from their jungle homes to sell as an offering for

---

"Christ in the heart of Southeast Asia; Southeast Asia in every heart." The seal drawn above is that of the Board of Foreign Missions of the United Church in The Philippines.

the mission work in Indonesia. I learned that all four of these attractive, dedicated young people were graduates of Silliman University.

When we headed for the Philippines, it was Silliman therefore that I wanted most of all to see. We had time for only a brief glimpse of Manila, a city of over a million people, the skeleton forms of wrecked ships still lying in the bay as grim reminders of the havoc wrought in the Philippines during World War II. Then we were whisked off by plane to Dumaguete City on Negros Island, to the quiet, tree-shaded campus of Silliman University. There I found staff members interested in a wide variety of specialties who were able and willing to give me from their wide experience a balanced picture of the Church of Christ in the Philippines.

The Rev. Proculo Rodriquez, one of four bishops of the United Church of Christ, each with spiritual jurisdiction over certain islands, probably knows as much about the evangelical movement as any man in the Philippines. The United Church came into existence in 1948 after the Philippines were given full independence by the United States. The life of this young Church has not been easy, he told us. Schools had to be rebuilt after the war, hospitals put back into running order, and 250 war-damaged churches and chapels repaired. He spoke in glowing terms of what a help the Presbyterian Restoration Fund had been, both materially and spiritually. Only within the year have the last of the Communist guerilla fighters been disbanded, but an unsettled economic and political climate will favor the growth of Communism in other forms for years to come. The great majority of evangelical church members live in rural areas where too often poverty and ignorance impede normal growth in Christian living.

He told us at length about the people that obviously lay close to his heart, the primitive jungle tribes called the Bilaans, in the mountains of southern Mindanao Island. When he mentioned an expedition from Silliman going that very week end to visit the Bilaan Christians, I leaped at the chance of going along, for these were the very people the Quismundos in Indonesia had described to us.

With fourteen boxes of food, medicine, and books contributed by Silliman students to the Rev. and Mrs. Genotiva and Miss Socorro Ayala, missionaries of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines living right in the midst of the tribal area, we went by boat to Mindanao Island. At a port on the extreme southern end we were met by Lorenzo Genotiva in his outrigger canoe with a small motor

which he uses for most of his pastoral work. Lorenzo and his wife spent the \$250 given to them by the Philippine Mission Board to buy the boat instead of building themselves a house. They didn't tell me that but others did. They were living in a one-room grass hut the Bilaans had built for them near the wooden clinic building where Miss Ayala, the nurse, lives. I watched people stream from their mountain villages into the clinic all day to be treated by the young doctor in our Silliman party: people suffering from malaria, yaws, tuberculosis, and many conditions that needed surgical treatment. Their most noticeable characteristic was their teeth, which were filed to a point and blackened by constant betelnut chewing. The women wore dark blouses covered all over with shell buttons, and yards of colored cloth wound round for a skirt. Animists of the most primitive kind, they were timid and fearful, making a precarious living by subsistence farming on temporary forest clearings.

What a contrast we found when we visited one of the five Christian churches in the area and experienced the genuine friendliness of the people. We saw them settled on their own permanent farms raising cash crops like coffee, hemp, and coconuts. Lorenzo told us some of his major concerns for them: to get the Bible translated into their language; to see that the government recognizes their claim to their farmlands; and to make them understand what Christian marriage means. I looked at these three young Filipino missionaries and marvelled. Lorenzo, *summa cum laude*, Silliman College of Theology; Esther, his lovely wife, Silliman-trained also; Socorro Ayala, efficient and immaculate nurse from the University hospital—all of them speaking as if the Bilaans were their own family.

The wonder did not diminish as I went back to Silliman and talked to young faculty members like Jorge Juliano, whom I waylaid as he cycled between his classroom and the farm. His happy experience at Penn State was still fresh in his mind as he explained to me what village life is like in the Philippines, but his gay smile disappeared as he told us of bad roads, primitive equipment, money lenders demanding over 100 per cent interest on their loans, Communist activities among poor landless tenants. His face brightened as he spoke of the rural church and of the hope it brings to the Philippines, 70 per cent of whose people are farmers. But it wasn't until later when we stayed overnight in a rural pastor's home in southern Luzon that I realized fully what he meant by the rural

church. The pastor's kitchen floor was made of bamboo slats; a blackened clay cooking pot was on the stove which consisted of three large stones. We slept on matting laid over a wooden frame, and there were no screens in the windows. But his flimsy house almost fell apart with the enthusiastic singing of the congregation which gathered on Sunday. He baptized twelve people, some from nearby pagan tribes that two years before had never heard of Jesus Christ. He read a written request from people in a distant village asking that an evangelist come and tell them about Christ.

But how difficult is the decision to go into the ministry when living conditions are primitive and the salary is so low! Eliezer ("Ely") Mapanao, dynamic youth worker now in his first year at Union Seminary, Manila, told us that it was at a Christmas youth conference that he first caught the vision of full-time Christian service. He told us that in twenty different conferences over 2,000 Christian young people meet during the Christmas holidays every year. Later I heard about the tremendous influence of religious emphasis week in evangelical schools, and the wonderful Galilean fellowship at Silliman when small groups of students gather for breakfast at 5:00 a.m. in professors' homes for a time of conversation and sharing of the deepest things of the spirit.

I went back later to the Seminary but could not visit again with Ely because it was the beginning of their annual two-day spiritual retreat. Union Seminary is located in the heart of Manila, one of the noisiest cities in the world, with thousands of jeepneys, cars, and busses passing by every day, and every window open to catch the breeze. My only reaction was a feeling that there is great hope for the evangelical church of the Philippines when its future leaders, in the midst of the mechanical din of modern Western civilization, can still take time to be silent for two days of prayer and listening to what God in Christ would say to them.

I went out one morning to an extension Sunday school in the slums of Manila and watched the young seminary-trained deaconesses and girls from Ellinwood Church hold a class of children spellbound as they told them Bible stories and taught them a hymn. Without tables, chairs, blackboard, piano, or books, without a roof over their heads even, these young women conduct nine extension Sunday schools attended regularly by 600 children.

I was full of enthusiasm over what I'd seen when I went in to keep a previous appointment with Fe Aldecoa of the Education Department of Silliman. "Let me tell you now what the feminine touch really means to the Church in the Philippines," she offered. Composed of twenty-two regional conferences, a national women's association has been organized. It was formed in 1937, just two years after Filipino women were given the vote, the first women in Asia to be granted the franchise, by the way. One church conference supports a full-time secretary, another a nurse; one runs a medical clinic; another gives scholarships to needy theological students. But apparently what had excited the women most in recent months was the Home and Family Life Conference held in Manila under the auspices of the East Asia division of the World Council of Churches. It was the first all-Asian gathering of Christian women ever to be held on Asian soil.

Miss Aldecoa told us that not only was invaluable leadership given to all the churches of Asia in the field of Christian family life, but even more far reaching results came about in the realm of friendship. No one can estimate what it meant to church women of the Philippines to have entertained in their homes Christian leaders from Korea, Japan, India, Thailand, Burma, Malaya, and Formosa. She related how the curiosity of rural church members outside Manila who had never seen an Indian, a Korean, or a Thai turned into warm appreciation after delegates to the conference went out and spent a Sunday with them.

On our last day in the Philippines we went to the island of Cebu to see the marker showing the place where Christianity first came to the Philippines, when Magellan's chaplain stepped ashore and celebrated Mass for the ship's crews on Easter Sunday, 1521. Interestingly enough, the marker is on land owned by a member of the United Church, and the majority of the people on the island today are Protestants or Independent church members.

Another historical event, which is celebrated on the island of Leyte annually as a legal holiday, is the first landing of the U.S. forces of liberation on October 20, 1944 under General Douglas Mac Arthur. We came away from the Philippines convinced that the United States has no truer or more understanding friends in the world than these vital and gifted people "on the borderland of the Orient." I realized that we were not only partners in democracy, but also partners in

a much greater enterprise—partners in obedience to Christ's great commission.

## AT THE CIRCLE MEETING

*Let us talk about the strengthening of the Ecumenical Mission, the whole Church taking the whole Gospel to the whole world.*

### I. General Discussion.

In this section, Mrs. Calvin tells of a number of ventures in home and foreign missions as carried on by the Filipino Christians. With which ones were you impressed?

Do you think there is a special witness which Filipino missionaries can render to their own tribespeople and also to other countries in Southeast Asia which would add to that which American and Dutch missionaries have made?

Does this lessen our American responsibility for Christian missions in this area? Because we send out "foreign missionaries" is our responsibility lessened for witnessing for Christ in our own community and country? Why do the two seem part of the "same mission"?

Is our Christian witness more nearly true because we with Christians of other races go as "partners in obedience" into all the world together?

How can we strengthen the Christian leadership of any country?

Perhaps you noticed that Mrs. Calvin was very anxious to see Silliman University, but never did describe its program. Actually in 1955 an educational commission composed of an educator from the Philippines, one from Korea, one from Japan, and one from the United States conducted a survey of Silliman University at the request of President Ruiz and Silliman's Board of Trustees, and drew up a set of recommendations. Having studied some of the needs which Christian leadership in that area has been asked to meet, what recommendations would you have made for Silliman University? A summary of the actual findings of this Commission will be in the *Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions*.

### II. REMEMBERING OUR HIGH CALLING IN CHRIST JESUS, LET US PRAY FOR THE PHILIPPINES.

Although it is thrilling to know that the largest number of Christian people in Asia live on the Philippine Islands, we still realize . . .

that the Evangelical Church is only a small minority of less than 200,000 in the midst of 15 million Roman Catholics, the majority of whom are determined to undermine the separation of

church and state written into the constitution of the young republic and make the Philippines a Catholic state; that materialism and secularism have invaded the land, established customs and accepted standards of value are being challenged, and young people are losing their way in a confused world; that the land area is the same and 70 per cent of the people are engaged in agriculture, but the population has increased from an estimated 7 million in 1900 to more than 19 million; that natural disasters, year after year, aggravate the situation until poverty becomes one of the greatest hindrances to the advance of the evangelical church. Dedicated young men are being trained as pastors but how can the church in the rural areas support them when the average member of the congregation has an income of less than \$100 a year?

*Consideration of these grave difficulties leads us to pray with Mrs. Jorge Quismundo, Filipino missionary in Indonesia when she says:*

O Lord, Our Father, thou who dost never cease to pursue us in our toil and strife, we humbly come to Thy presence to bare unto Thee our hopes, our fears, our failures, our triumphs, even as we go forth in obedience to Thy will for us.

Refill us, O Lord, with patience and humility as we face the challenge of this year to dare the Revolution of our day and to give nothing less than our best to fulfill Thy purpose for the world.

In Him do we pray, Jesus Christ our Peace and Reconciler. Amen.

#### READING ROUTE

*The Church in Southeast Asia*, Thomas and Manikam  
Chapter 4—"The Philippine Islands"

*East of Burma*, Constance Hallock  
Chapter 4—"The Road is Rough"

*Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions*  
Section on The Philippines

*The Philippine Islands, A Guide* by Helen Abrahamsen  
Pacific Books, Palo Alto, 1954

*Day After Tomorrow*, Alice Hudson Lewis

*Bare Feet in the Palace*, Agnes Newton Keith  
Little, Brown, and Company, Boston, 1955



- The Philippine Answer to Communism*, Alvin H. Scaff  
Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1955
- Land and People of the Philippines*, J. E. Spencer  
University of California Press, Berkeley, 1952
- Send the Wise Wind*, Kate Bigelow Montague  
John Day Company, New York, 1952
- The United Church of Christ in the Philippines*  
Free—Available from P. D. S.

See also the free leaflets explaining Presbyterians in Ecumenical Mission; available from Presbyterian Distribution Service.

“Presbyterians in Ecumenical Mission”

“The Ecumenical Mission Proclaims Jesus Christ the Way”

A study booklet by Richard Hoag on the Evaluation Conference will be ready by late fall and will be of interest in relation to the theme under discussion.

See also section on The Philippines in the general books on Southeast Asia, listed on page 14.

## FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

If it is possible to have a fifth session on this subject of Southeast Asia, you will have an opportunity to do some additional things. Here are suggestions:

1. Have reports on other areas of Southeast Asia, such as Burma, Malaya, and others as found in the basic text, *The Church in Southeast Asia*, by Thomas and Manikam.
2. Have a summary session looking at the region as a whole in relation to what we as a Church should be doing there. It would be an excellent project if your Association would put into a letter to the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, your convictions on this subject. Address: 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, New York, Attention: *Miss Margaret Shannon*. She will see that your letter is put into the hands of the Secretary for Southeast Asia who is a Filipino, one of four secretaries of other nationalities working in the headquarters offices of the Board, administering the work of Presbyterians in the ecumenical mission. You write letters to Congressmen, the United Nations and other people in order to bring to bear the "will of the people." Why not influence the Board which wants to be a channel of your love and concern for Jesus Christ in its witness in Southeast Asia? Perhaps each Circle could appoint one person to a Findings Committee, giving her some ideas as to what the recommendations of the Circle are. This committee could draw up the letter and have it read to the Association as a whole before it is sent, to be sure it represents your point of view.
3. Your responsibility begins with the wider group in the church of which you are a part. Sponsor another church family-wide meeting and plan the program that will educate the whole church family; show one of the movies if this has not been done; read your letter expressing your conviction on the mission which the Christian Church has in Southeast Asia and what it should emphasize in the next five years. Add a P.S. to the letter saying whether or not your whole church in the general meeting has agreed to your statements.

## NOTES ON USING THIS BOOK

A series of booklets on "Conversations" in some field of missionary interest has been planned in order to encourage women in small groups to talk together on the mission of the church. Too long this very important cause has suffered because it has been talked *at* people, rather than talked *over by* people.

Of course, no one would want you to stop with just talking, for there is a far deeper purpose. We would like every woman to get so involved in these various subjects, that forever afterwards she will pick up news items, mention related topics at the market and club and other places outside the church, know and support and influence what her church is doing in these fields, pray and work for the things the church ought to be doing and is not. But it all begins with knowing enough about Southeast Asia, for instance, to enter into conversation on this very interesting part of the world. In this book of Conversations, we want to emphasize more than just the geographic area. We would like to talk through the motive and place of the missionary in this "new day" when younger churches are coming into their own; we would like to see why Christian forces are so important in the midst of a revolutionary social order in Asia. A special phase of this has been developed in each Circle Session. Don't avoid the serious discussion part, for it may reveal more about your members than you realize.

Now how will you find out enough to talk about Southeast Asia? One way is for every member of the circle to have a copy of this book and take time to read the few pages in each chapter before the circle meeting. Of course, the leader must have the basic study books and pictorial helps put out by the Friendship Press (listed on page 46 and available from your Presbyterian Distribution Service). By special planning the leader will be able to make some assignments in the basic books. Therefore your first rule is this: Everybody knows enough to talk about the subject and is given a chance to do it; the more everybody knows, the easier the task of a leader!

### ***Stimulation of Study***

How can we get everybody interested enough to do some reading? Here is where the Association as a whole under the direction of the Missionary Education Secretary will enter in. Of course, she has entered earlier by getting together the key persons in charge of each circle to work out and share materials, methods, visual aids, assignments, etc., but this time she enters in the open at a big stimulation session. Here are some plans. If your circle meets after the Association meeting of the month, have a special tea at which you use some of the especially designed napkins and favors on Southeast Asia, available from the Wright Studio (for address, see page 47). The Literature Secretary will be on hand to exchange a copy of this book for

20¢. Or if you have lunch together, try the Puzzlemats, also available from the Wright Studio. Here the contest for the Reading Route among the Circles can be announced, or it can be agreed that each Circle will develop a scrapbook on one of the countries of Southeast Asia. There are several, such as Burma, Indo-China, and Malaya, which are part of the study but are not dealt with in these Conversations because there is no direct Presbyterian responsibility in those places. But really every Christian has a responsibility for the whole world, even though the major mission boards have agreed to divide the responsibility. It would be especially good if you could have a student from Southeast Asia as your guest, or if one of your missionaries from that area could be impersonated at the tea just to answer the obvious questions. Perhaps there are members of the group who have traveled there and would share their souvenirs and be special hostesses. The author of this book on Conversations has pretended that she is a member of one of your circles so that you would feel very close to her as she talks over the things of interest. Maybe at the tea you could have a ceremony welcoming back the imaginary Mrs. Calvin, hanging her new membership card on a specially decorated chair. By the time you finish these four studies, you will all be talking about her as if she were actually there.

Better still, the Missionary Education Committee of your church may want to sponsor a church-wide stimulation session, for after all, Presbyterian men and Westminster Fellowships are also studying this same theme. Even if their plans are otherwise, the more people who know ahead of time about your theme, the easier it will be to pick up conversation notes between meetings. This could be held instead of a Sunday evening service, using one of the films listed on page 47.

Don't forget that the children will be studying the Philippines and have some delightful books, so include them in your planning, incidentally educating their parents at the same time. Make every home a missionary-center.

#### ***At the Circle Meeting.***

Here are some hints for the leader of the Circle meeting.

1. Start with something they all know and can share: an association test; an opinion test; facts presented on a chart or in a picture; a game using matched facts.

2. Give them all a reason for reading the material by using it during the meeting.

3. Assign special topics in the basic texts to special people before the meeting. It is best to select one question that they all want to discuss and give each her chance to talk, rather than to race through a specified Program Plan for the Circle. Study "Leading Discussions" in the *Handbook*, page 66.

4. Always leave the impression that this is not a "once for all" matter. Urge people to list in this book other objects of prayer which their study has stimulated. Follow up with suggestions of reading in the field, either from references in the mission study books or from books in the public library. A reading list on Southeast Asia is available from the Presbyterian Mission Library, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, New York. The books may be borrowed from the Library for one month, with renewal privileges. Some of these reading suggestions are proposed in each Conversation chapter, and can be "routed" among various members of the Circle. Perhaps a contest among the Circles will determine which group can add the most pages to their "reading route" during the session of this study. Perhaps some members will prefer to select one country and read about it throughout the course.

5. Ask the key person from the World Service Department to keep you aware of the activities of the Presbyterian Church in each area. Consult the *Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions*, Part II of the General Assembly Minutes in your pastor's library, or sold separately in PDS for 25¢. *The Year Book of Prayer* and articles in *Outreach* will give you the names and some news and facts about our missionaries there. Send to your Area Secretary for other letters of interest from this area. Particularly watch for the reports of the Consultation in April when the Board, in conference with their field representatives and an elected leader from each of the churches with which Presbyterians are associated overseas, will draw up plans and emphases for the next five years. One of the most thrilling things about being part of the Church is that when you sense some of the problems of the world, there is something you can do about them.

6. Worship should be part of the study and conducted by the leader rather than being a separate "devotional". If the Circle study has been a success, people will want to pray together. A worship experience could logically follow each meeting, with various members suggesting concerns, and the names and activities of Presbyterian workers in these fields being read from the *Year Book of Prayer*.

A prayer written by a fellow Christian from each area studied has been included that you may realize we are together seeking to further the Kingdom in our own hearts and in that part of the earth on which the eyes of our hearts have been centering during this hour.

**Reading List of Books Published by the Joint Commission on Missionary Education for Interdenominational Study.**

*The Church in Southeast Asia*, Winburn T. Thomas and Rajah B. Manikam.

The basic study book on Southeast Asia, presenting the problems and opportunities the churches face in this vast and strategic area. Price, Cloth 2.50; paper 1.25

*East From Burma*, Constance M. Hallock

Background book on Southeast Asia for adults, political, social, economic, and religious situations in these countries. Price, Cloth 2.50; paper 1.25

*Adult Guide on Southeast Asia*, Doris Dennison

A Study Guide written for use with the two basic books. Price 50¢

*Fun and Festival from Southeast Asia*, Constance M. Hallock

Games, festival ideas, recipes, and other entertaining resource material from these countries. Price 50¢

*Day After Tomorrow*, Alice Hudson Lewis

Intriguing stories from six parts of Southeast Asia for teen-agers. Price, Cloth 2.50; paper 1.25

*Ricardo's Search*, Grace W. McGavran

A story about children in the Philippines for junior age. Price, Cloth 2.50; paper 1.25

*Second Son*, Margaret Clemens McDowell

A story about children in the Philippines for primary age. Price, Cloth 2.50; paper 1.25

*Juan and Juanita*, Sara G. Klein

One of the Little Playmate Book series, the story of a pair of twins in a small village in the Philippines. Price, paper 75¢; 1.25 boards; Set (paper) 3 books for 2.00

The above books, published by Friendship Press, are available at your Presbyterian Distribution Center.

A Bibliography on Southeast Asia is available from the Presbyterian Foreign Mission Library, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, New York.

## AUDIO-VISUAL RESOURCES

### Films

- "Southeast Asia"—Black and white filmstrip based on Malaya story in *Day After Tomorrow*. Good background for any discussion on Southeast Asia. Price, \$3.00.
- "Elena of the Philippines"—color filmstrip primarily for children. The story of a young girl in the Philippines. Price \$5.00.
- "Decision in Thailand"—color movie, 16 mm., sound, 29 minutes. The story of young people in an old country. Photographed in Bangkok and Chiangmai. Price \$8.00.
- "Decision in Hong Kong"—To be available in the fall of 1956.
- "In Face of Jeopardy"—color or black and white movie, 16 mm. sound, 29 minutes. A tense, dramatic film concerning the struggle between Communism and Christianity being waged in Southeast Asia today. Price, black and white \$8.00; color \$12.00.

### Maps

- Political Map of Southeast Asia*. Contour type map in color. Available in large and small sizes. 40 x 30 inches, large, 75¢; Small, 75¢ per dozen 13¼ x 11 inches.
- Map of the World*. Highlighting the world-wide mission of the Church by pinpointing important ecumenical centers. In six colors, 50 x 72 inches. Price 4.25.
- Picture Map of the Philippines*. A large map with accompanying cut-out pictures and descriptive text telling about the country and its people. Black and white, 50 x 38 inches, Price 75¢

### Accessories

- Colorful accessories are available from the Wright Studio, 5335 Ohmer Avenue, Indianapolis 19, Indiana.
- Puzzlemat*, presenting a map of Southeast Asia, surrounded by important products.
- Napkins*, matching in color and designed with eight panels typical of Oriental art.
- "*Four-Way Favor*," which may be used as a reading check-list, a bookmark, a place card, a work- and quiz-sheet giving pertinent information.
- Water Buffalo and Boy*, a cut-out decoration.
- One unit including 10 each of the first three items, and one Water Buffalo and Boy, \$1.75. Each additional unit, 70¢
- The special packet for banquets includes 50 Puzzlemats and 50 napkins and some single items for leaders. First set, \$3.25; each additional set, \$1.80.
- The above films and maps are available at your Presbyterian Distribution Service.

**Circle Study, 1956**

BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS  
BOARD OF NATIONAL MISSIONS  
BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.

Price, 20 cents; six for \$1.00

Printed in U.S.A.

602-50M-1956